

The essay on Health also shows itself sensitive to eugenical considerations. It defends modern preventive medicine against the charge of dysgenically fostering the preservation of the unfit, by pointing out that for every lethal case, there are ten or twenty cases weakened or disabled by disease. It also recognizes the seriousness of the situation with regard to mental disease or defect. Although the provision made for its care "is approximately equal to the total of hospital beds required for all other diseases," they are "grossly inadequate to meet existing needs" (p. 200).

But by far the most refreshing and helpful pronouncements on eugenics are to be found in Mr. Bertrand Russell's brilliant essay on Science, which contains, besides much delightfully witty and entertaining writing, two announcements of first-class importance. In philosophy, Mr. Russell has definitely and unequivocally come over to the Instrumental Theory of Knowledge, or, in other words, to American pragmatism. America, he declares, "is leading the way in the transition from science as knowledge to science as a set of practical habits. On this ground, whoever is interested in the future should especially study America. To my mind, the best work that has been done anywhere in philosophy and psychology during the present century has been done in America" (p. 66). Its "philosophy, inspired by industrialism, is sweeping away the static conception of knowledge which dominated both mediæval and modern philosophy, and has substituted what it calls the Instrumental Theory," in which "there is not a single state of mind which consists of knowing a truth—there is a way of acting, of handling the environment, which is appropriate and whose appropriateness constitutes what alone can be called knowledge." It would define thus "*To know something is to be able to change it as we wish. There is no place in this outlook for the beatific vision, nor for any notion of final excellence*" (p. 72).

Secondly, Mr. Russell now realizes that "the most intelligent individuals, on the

average, breed least, and do not breed enough to keep their numbers constant. Unless new incentives are discovered to induce them to breed, they will soon not be sufficiently numerous to supply the intelligence needed for maintaining a highly technical and elaborate system" (p. 80). And as the political prospects for any remedy are bad everywhere, "we must expect, at any rate for the next hundred years, that each generation will be congenitally stupider than its predecessor. This is a grave prospect" (p. 81), because "we shall gradually become incapable of wielding the science we already have." Nevertheless, Mr. Russell hopes that "the honeymoon intoxication of the machine-age will pass soonest in the countries which have been the first to experience it," and so the western nations, and especially America, may "establish first that more humane, more stable and more truly scientific civilization towards which, as I hope, the world is tending" (p. 82).

To appreciate the full significance of these remarks we should compare Mr. Russell's *Icarus*, pp. 47-53. Comment is needless; I can only congratulate the cause of eugenics on so distinguished a convert, and Mr. Russell on the unabated progressiveness of his mind. For myself I need only refer to p. 53 of *Tantalus*, recall a remark which I had the audacity to make to Mr. Russell nearly twenty years ago, to the effect that we had both been repelled from Hegelism in diametrically opposite directions, but that I cherished a hope that if we each went straight on we should one day meet face to face because the intellectual universe also was *round*, and sing my *Nunc Dimittis*.

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Knibbs, Sir George Handley, C.M.G., F.R.A.S. *The Shadow of the World's Future*. London, 1928. Ernest Benn. Pp. 131. Price 10s. 6d.

THE conclusion of this short yet learned work is expressed in the words used by the author in this report of the Australian census of 1911. They are :

"The present rate of increase in the

world's population cannot continue. The extraordinary increase in the standard of living which has characterized the last few decades must quickly be brought to a standstill or be determined by the destructive forces of human extravagance. Very soon, the world politic will have to face the question whether it is better that there should be larger numbers and more modest living, or fewer numbers and lavish living; whether world morality should aim at the enjoyment of life by a great multitude or aim at the restriction of life experience to a few, that they may live in relative opulence."

The shadow of the world's future is the menace of over-population. In a short compass, but with admirable lucidity, the author touches upon subjects such as the distribution of the world's population, man's agricultural, forestal, and animal needs, the world's mineral needs, international economics and migration, and world population and nationalism.

This book will serve as an excellent introduction to the problem of world population, and it is to be hoped that it will have a wide influence in the southern hemisphere where in this problem has not yet become acute in its quantitative aspect, and where it is more capable of intelligent regulation than in the older continents of Europe and Asia. It is gratifying to note that Sir George Knibbs welcomes the world population conference, which took place at Geneva in 1927, and has carefully studied its *Proceedings*; and it is still more gratifying to know that the author ranges himself with that element of the conference which regarded the problem of world population as one that must be solved by eugenic methods.

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MENTAL DISEASE

Board of Control. *Fourteenth Annual Report for the Year 1927.* London, 1928. Stationery Office. Part 1. 1s. 9d., Part 2. 9s.

THIS is an exceedingly interesting document. Apart from the usual statistical matter and the formal report presented,

there is matter of wide interest for all concerned in mental welfare.

Eugenists will congratulate themselves and the Commissioners on the appearance, in this report, of much material that can only be regarded as eugenic in character. The study of mental disorder must inevitably lead in this direction, with the result that the Commissioners in lunacy must find themselves, without any distinct leanings towards eugenics, thinking on parallel lines with those who study eugenics. Hence the character of such reports as this must continually converge towards eugenic ideals.

The Commissioners lay special emphasis upon the lack of accommodation for cases both of mental disorder and of mental deficiency, and call attention to the serious social consequences that ensue. A large part of the Report is concerned with this subject. The Commissioners "feel bound to emphasize the seriousness of this shortage, because . . . it is essential that it should be borne in mind that lunacy and mental deficiency are merely different aspects of what is in reality one problem. . . . Not only are mental disorder and mental deficiency intimately connected medically, but, both being the fundamental causes of various social evils, there are numerous cases now sent to Mental Hospitals which, for their own sake and for that of others, could be better dealt with in institutions for mental defectives, and, indeed, would undoubtedly be so dealt with if the number of such institutions provided by local authorities were reasonably adequate. . . . In order to emphasize how great are the arrears in accommodation for mental defectives, we may point to the fact that, so far, not a single local authority has itself provided sufficient institutional accommodation to meet the needs of its mental defectives; that scarcely 18 per cent. of the authorities have provided any accommodation at all; and that, upon the lowest calculation, there are not far short of 20,000 mental defectives for whom institutional care is required, but is unobtainable."

A by-product of this shortage is that mental deficient are often sent to mental